

Happy Nurses Week!

Avoiding Liability Bulletin - May 2013

May 6-13, 2013 is National Nurses Week. This year's theme is "Delivering Quality and Innovation In Patient Care".

Quality care is something that you strive for on a regular basis as a practicing nurse. Indeed, your annual evaluations measure your success in meeting that goal. So, too, is your devotion to continuing education, whether in the form of CE programs, an advanced degree, or certification in a specialty in nursing. And, your focus on wellness for the patient, his or her family, and the community in which your patient lives gives added support to ensuring quality nursing care.

As you probably know all too well (since you have been reading these Bulletins for some time!), quality care clearly involves the provision of non-negligent care. It also involves ensuring patient safety. Your continual vigilance against breaching your standard of care and keeping a watchful eye out for safety risks to the patient speaks volumes in terms of your desire to provide quality care to your patients.

Quality care also involves the human side of nursing practice. Listening to your patient's concerns and fears, educating the patient and the family about illness and illness prevention, and advocating for your patient are but a few examples of the human aspects of the practice of nursing.

There are many innovations that exist, and are proposed, for the provision of quality care. You must strive to take part in those innovations. You may also propose some of your own. In either case, analyzing current practices in the provision of nursing care and where and how improvements can occur is an ever-present responsibility.

In addition to focusing on the patient and his or her family, quality care also includes caring for yourself. A safe workplace, adequate staffing, teamwork, feeling your best when you report for work, good interpersonal relationships with your fellow health care team, and knowing one's limitations are all a part of quality care for you as the nurse. Without caring for yourself, you can't possibly provide quality care for another.

It is an exciting time to be practicing nursing. Yes, there are some frustrating times too, ones you know all too well. But change requires openness, a willingness to explore and try new approaches, and knowledge that change can be uncomfortable at times. But, if you keep at it, learn from the changes, and take advantage of the new opportunities afforded you, your patients will benefit, and I bet you will too.

Again, Happy Nurses Week! Thanks to all of you for what you do to provide quality care and to your development and participation in those patient care innovations that lie ahead in this, and

subsequent, years.

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